

**President Obama's speech  
January 20, 2009. English**

***My fellow citizens:***

*I stand here today humbled by the task before us, grateful for the trust you have bestowed, mindful of the sacrifices borne by our ancestors. I thank President Bush for his service to our nation, as well as the generosity and cooperation he has shown throughout this transition.*

*Forty-four Americans have now taken the presidential oath. The words have been spoken during rising tides of prosperity and the still waters of peace. Yet, every so often the oath is taken amidst gathering clouds and raging storms. At these moments, America has carried on not simply because of the skill or vision of those in high office, but because We the People have remained faithful to the ideals of our forbearers, and true to our founding documents.*

*So it has been. So it must be with this generation of Americans.*

*That we are in the midst of crisis is now well understood. Our nation is at war, against a far-reaching network of violence and hatred. Our economy is badly weakened, a consequence of greed and irresponsibility on the part of some, but also our collective failure to make hard choices and prepare the nation for a new age.*

*Homes have been lost; jobs shed; businesses shuttered. Our health care is too costly; our schools fail too many; and each day brings further evidence that the ways we use energy strengthen our adversaries and threaten our planet.*

*These are the indicators of crisis, subject to data and statistics. Less measurable but no less profound is a sapping of confidence across our land – a nagging fear that America's decline is inevitable, and that the next generation must lower its sights.*

*Today I say to you that the challenges we face are real. They are serious and they are many. They will not be met easily or in a short span of time. But know this, America – they will be met. On this day, we gather because we have chosen hope over fear, unity of purpose over conflict and discord.*

*On this day, we come to proclaim an end to the petty grievances and false promises, the recriminations and worn out dogmas, that for far too long have strangled our politics.*

**President Obama's Inauguration Speech,  
January 20, 2009. Globish**

**My friends and citizens:**

I stand here today full of respect for the work before us. I want to thank you for the trust you have given, and I remember the sacrifices made by our ancestors. I thank President Bush for his service to our nation, as well as for the spirit of giving and cooperation he has shown during this change-over.

Forty four Americans have now been sworn in as president. The words have been spoken during rising waves of wealth and well-being and the still waters of peace. Yet, every so often, these words of honor are spoken surrounded by gathering clouds and wild storms. At these times, America has carried on not simply because those in high office were skilled or could see into the future. But it has been because We the People have kept believing in the values of our first fathers, and stayed true to the documents that created our country. So it has been. So it must be with this modern-day population of Americans

It is well understood now that we are in the middle of a crisis. Our nation is at war, against a far-reaching, organized system of violence and hate. Our economy has been badly weakened. This is the result of extreme desire for great wealth by some people, and failure to act responsibly. But we have all failed to make hard choices and to get the nation ready for a new age.

Homes have been lost; jobs given up; businesses have closed. Our health care costs too much; our schools fail too many; and each day brings further proof that the ways we use energy make those against us stronger and threaten our world

These are the ways we can measure a crisis. Another problem is just as great, but we cannot measure it as easily. It is the draining of our own belief in America -- a fear that America's fall is surely coming and that future Americans must lower their hopes.

Today I say to you that the trials we face are real. They are serious and they are many. They will not be met easily or in a short time. But know this, America -- they will be met. On this day we gather because we have chosen hope over fear. We have chosen united purpose over fighting and over noisy argument.

On this day we come to announce an end to narrow-minded arguing, to the lies, and to the accusing and worn out teachings that for far too long have killed our politics.

*We remain a young nation, but in the words of Scripture, the time has come to set aside childish things. The time has come to reaffirm our enduring spirit; to choose our better history; to carry forward that precious gift, that noble idea, passed on from generation to generation: the God-given promise that all are equal, all are free, and all deserve a chance to pursue their full measure of happiness.*

*In reaffirming the greatness of our nation, we understand that greatness is never a given. It must be earned. Our journey has never been one of short-cuts or settling for less. It has not been the path for the faint-hearted – for those who prefer leisure over work, or seek only the pleasures of riches and fame.*

*Rather, it has been the risk-takers, the doers, the makers of things – some celebrated but more often men and women obscure in their labor, who have carried us up the long, rugged path towards prosperity and freedom.*

*For us, they packed up their few worldly possessions and traveled across oceans in search of a new life.*

*For us, they toiled in sweatshops and settled the West; endured the lash of the whip and plowed the hard earth.*

*For us, they fought and died, in places like Concord and Gettysburg; Normandy and Khe Sahn.*

*Time and again these men and women struggled and sacrificed and worked till their hands were raw so that we might live a better life. They saw America as bigger than the sum of our individual ambitions; greater than all the differences of birth or wealth or faction.*

*This is the journey we continue today. We remain the most prosperous, powerful nation on Earth. Our workers are no less productive than when this crisis began. Our minds are no less inventive, our goods and services no less needed than they were last week or last month or last year. Our capacity remains undiminished. But our time of standing pat, of protecting narrow interests and putting off unpleasant decisions – that time has surely passed. Starting today, we must pick ourselves up, dust ourselves off, and begin again the work of remaking America.*

*For everywhere we look, there is work to be done. The state of the economy calls for action, bold and swift, and we will act - not only to create new jobs, but to lay a new foundation for growth. We will build the roads and bridges, the electric grids and digital lines that feed our commerce and bind us together. We will restore science to its rightful place, and wield*

We remain a young nation, but in the words of the Holy Book, the time has come to put away childish things. The time has come to back up again our timeless spirit; to choose our better history; to carry forward that valued gift. This is the honored idea that has passed on from father and mother to child. It is the God-given truth that we are all equal, all are free, and all should have a chance to seek their full measure of happiness.

We are confirming and rebuilding the greatness of our nation. But we understand that greatness is never a given. It must be earned. Our history has never been one of short-cuts or settling for less. It has not been the path for the weak-hearted -- for those who want to play instead of work, or to seek only the comfort of richness and popularity.

Instead, we should honor the risk-takers, the ones who "do," the makers of things. Some of them were celebrated but more often they were men and women hidden in their labor. They were the ones who carried us up the long, rough path toward freedom and the good life.

For us, they took their few material belongings and travelled across oceans in search of a new life.

For us, they worked long hours in low-paying factories and settled in the West. They were beaten by the slave-master's stick and worked the hard earth.

For us, they fought and died, in places like Concord and Gettysburg; Normandy and Khe San.

Time and again these men and women struggled and sacrificed and worked till their hands were torn open so that we might have a better life. They saw America as bigger than the total of our individual dreams added up together; greater than all the differences of birth, wealth or social group.

This is a path that we continue to travel today. We remain the most successful, powerful nation on Earth. Our workers produce no less than when the crisis began. Our minds are no less able to invent, our goods and services no less necessary than they were last week or last month or last year. Our power has not decreased. But our time of standing down, of protecting selfish interests and putting off hard decisions -- that time has surely passed. Starting today, we must pick ourselves up, dust ourselves off, and begin again the work of remaking  
America.

For everywhere we look, there is work to be done. The condition of our economy calls for something to be done, brave and quick. And we will act - not only to create new jobs, but to create a new environment for growth. We will build the roads and bridges, the electric system and computer lines that feed the trade in our markets and connect us to each other. We will return

*technology's wonders to raise health care's quality and lower its cost. We will harness the sun and the winds and the soil to fuel our cars and run our factories. And we will transform our schools and colleges and universities to meet the demands of a new age. All this we can do. And all this we will do.*

*Now, there are some who question the scale of our ambitions - who suggest that our system cannot tolerate too many big plans.*

*Their memories are short. For they have forgotten what this country has already done; what free men and women can achieve when imagination is joined to common purpose, and necessity to courage.*

*What the cynics fail to understand is that the ground has shifted beneath them - that the stale political arguments that have consumed us for so long no longer apply. The question we ask today is not whether our government is too big or too small, but whether it works - whether it helps families find jobs at a decent wage, care they can afford, a retirement that is dignified. Where the answer is yes, we intend to move forward. Where the answer is no, programs will end. And those of us who manage the public's dollars will be held to account - to spend wisely, reform bad habits, and do our business in the light of day - because only then can we restore the vital trust between a people and their government.*

*Nor is the question before us whether the market is a force for good or ill. Its power to generate wealth and expand freedom is unmatched, but this crisis has reminded us that without a watchful eye, the market can spin out of control - and that a nation cannot prosper long when it favors only the prosperous.*

*The success of our economy has always depended not just on the size of our Gross Domestic Product, but on the reach of our prosperity; on our ability to extend opportunity to every willing heart - not out of charity, but because it is the surest route to our common good.*

*As for our common defense, we reject as false the choice between our safety and our ideals. Our Founding Fathers, faced with perils we can scarcely imagine, drafted a charter to assure the rule of law and the rights of man, a charter expanded by the blood of generations. Those ideals still light the world, and we will not give them up for expedience's sake.*

*And so to all other peoples and governments who are watching today, from the grandest capitals to the small village where my father was born: know that America is a friend of each nation and every man, woman, and child who seeks a future of peace and*

science to its right place, and use technology's wonders to raise health care's quality and lower its cost. We will capture the sun and the winds and the soil to fuel our cars and run our factories. And we will improve our schools and colleges and universities to meet the demands of a new age. All this we can do. And all this we will do.

Now there are some who question the scale of our plans -- who suggest that our system cannot accept too many big plans.

Their memories are short. For they have forgotten what this country has already done. They have forgotten what free men and women can gain when imagination is joined to common purpose, and when we bravely do what must be done.

Those who doubt fail to understand one key thing: that the ground has moved from under them. And that the old political arguments that have delayed us for so long can no longer be used. The question we ask today is not if our government is too big or too small, but if it works. We ask if it helps families find jobs at an acceptable pay, provides good low-cost health care, and lets citizens retire with respect and comfort. Where the answer is yes, we will move forward. Where the answer is no, programs will end. And those of us who are in charge of the public's money will be held responsible. We must spend wisely, improve bad customs, and do our business in the light of day, because only then can we bring back the required trust between a people and their government.

The question before us is not if the market is a force for good or ill. Its power to create wealth and expand freedom is unmatched. But this crisis has demonstrated to us that without an eye to watch it, the market can get out of control. This crisis shows us that a nation cannot gain wealth when it acts only in the interests of the wealthy.

The success of our economy has always depended not just on its size and value, but on the outreach of our national wealth. It has depended on our ability to give an opportunity for success to every willing heart -- not as a handout, but because it is the surest road to the common good.

As for our common defense, we reject as false the choice between our safety and our values. Our first fathers were faced with dangers we can hardly imagine, but in that time they wrote a Constitution that established the rule of law and the rights of man. The laws and values of that Constitution were expanded by the blood of our people through history. Those values still light the world, and we will not give them up for the easy way out.

And so we say something to all other peoples and governments who are watching today, from important capitals to the small town where my father was born. We say: You should know that America is a friend to each nation and every man, woman and child who seeks

*dignity, and that we are ready to lead once more.*

*Recall that earlier generations faced down fascism and communism not just with missiles and tanks, but with sturdy alliances and enduring convictions. They understood that our power alone cannot protect us, nor does it entitle us to do as we please. Instead, they knew that our power grows through its prudent use; our security emanates from the justness of our cause, the force of our example, the tempering qualities of humility and restraint. We are the keepers of this legacy. Guided by these principles once more, we can meet those new threats that demand even greater effort – even greater cooperation and understanding between nations. We will begin to responsibly leave Iraq to its people, and forge a hard-earned peace in Afghanistan. With old friends and former foes, we will work tirelessly to lessen the nuclear threat, and roll back the specter of a warming planet. We will not apologize for our way of life, nor will we waver in its defense, and for those who seek to advance their aims by inducing terror and slaughtering innocents, we say to you now that our spirit is stronger and cannot be broken; you cannot outlast us, and we will defeat you.*

*For we know that our patchwork heritage is a strength, not a weakness. We are a nation of Christians and Muslims, Jews and Hindus – and non-believers. We are shaped by every language and culture, drawn from every end of this Earth; and because we have tasted the bitter swill of civil war and segregation, and emerged from that dark chapter stronger and more united, we cannot help but believe that the old hatreds shall someday pass; that the lines of tribe shall soon dissolve; that as the world grows smaller, our common humanity shall reveal itself; and that America must play its role in ushering in a new era of peace.*

*To the Muslim world, we seek a new way forward, based on mutual interest and mutual respect. To those leaders around the globe who seek to sow conflict, or blame their society's ills on the West – know that your people will judge you on what you can build, not what you destroy. To those who cling to power through corruption and deceit and the silencing of dissent, know that you are on the wrong side of history; but that we will extend a hand if you are willing to unclench your fist.*

*To the people of poor nations, we pledge to work alongside you to make your farms flourish and let clean waters flow; to nourish starved bodies and feed hungry minds. And to those nations like ours that enjoy relative plenty, we say we can no longer afford indifference to suffering outside our borders; nor can*

a future of peace and shared respect. You should know that we are ready to lead once more.

Remember that earlier people faced down governments of dictators and extreme socialism not just with weapons and artillery, but with strong ties to allies and lasting beliefs. They understood that our power alone cannot protect us, nor does it give us the right to do as we please. Instead, they know that our power grows through its careful use. They know that our security comes from the justness of our cause, the force of our example, and the calming qualities of respectfulness and restraint. We are the keepers of this tradition. As long as we are guided by these values once more, we can meet those new dangers that demand even greater effort -- even greater cooperation and understanding between nations. We will begin to responsibly leave Iraq to its people, and create a hard-earned peace in Afghanistan. With old friends and former enemies, we will never stop working to lessen the danger of nuclear war. We will roll back the warming of the earth that continues to threaten us. We will not apologize for our way of life, nor will we halt in defending it. For those who seek to push forward their aims by bringing about fear and by killing innocents, you should listen. We say to you now that our spirit is stronger and cannot be broken; you cannot last longer than us, and we will defeat you.

For we know that our differing and mixed traditions are a strength, not a weakness. We are a nation of Christians and Muslims, Jews and Hindus - and non-believers. We are shaped by every language and culture, called forward from every end of this Earth. We cannot help but believe the old hate will pass because we have tasted the terrible drink of civil war and racial injustice. We have come out from that dark time stronger and more united. We must believe the lines of race will soon clear away; that as the world grows smaller, our common human nature will come out into the open. And we know that America must play its part in welcoming in a new age of peace.

To the Muslim world, we seek a new way forward, based on shared interest and shared respect. To those leaders around the world who seek to increase anger and bad feelings, or blame their society's ills on the West -- your people will watch you. You should know that they will judge you on what you can build, not what you destroy. You hold on to power through breaking of trust and by trickery and by silencing of those who feel and think differently. You should know that you are on the wrong side of history, but that we will extend a hand if you are willing to untighten your fist.

To the people of poor nations, we give you our word of honor. We will work with you to make your businesses grow and to let clean waters flow; we will help feed starved bodies and hungry minds. And to those nations like ours that enjoy comparative plenty, we say this. We can no longer turn a blind eye to suffering outside our borders; nor can we use up the world's resources

*we consume the world's resources without regard to effect. For the world has changed, and we must change with it.*

*As we consider the road that unfolds before us, we remember with humble gratitude those brave Americans who, at this very hour, patrol far-off deserts and distant mountains. They have something to tell us today, just as the fallen heroes who lie in Arlington whisper through the ages. We honor them not only because they are guardians of our liberty, but because they embody the spirit of service; a willingness to find meaning in something greater than themselves.*

*And yet, at this moment – a moment that will define a generation – it is precisely this spirit that must inhabit us all.*

*For as much as government can do and must do, it is ultimately the faith and determination of the American people upon which this nation relies. It is the kindness to take in a stranger when the levees break, the selflessness of workers who would rather cut their hours than see a friend lose their job which sees us through our darkest hours. It is the firefighter's courage to storm a stairway filled with smoke, but also a parent's willingness to nurture a child, that finally decides our fate.*

*Our challenges may be new. The instruments with which we meet them may be new. But those values upon which our success depends – hard work and honesty, courage and fair play, tolerance and curiosity, loyalty and patriotism – these things are old. These things are true. They have been the quiet force of progress throughout our history. What is demanded then is a return to these truths. What is required of us now is a new era of responsibility – a recognition, on the part of every American, that we have duties to ourselves, our nation, and the world, duties that we do not grudgingly accept but rather seize gladly, firm in the knowledge that there is nothing so satisfying to the spirit, so defining of our character, than giving our all to a difficult task.*

*This is the price and the promise of citizenship.*

*This is the source of our confidence – the knowledge that God calls on us to shape an uncertain destiny.*

*This is the meaning of our liberty and our creed – why men and women and children of every race and every faith can join in celebration across this magnificent mall, and why a man whose father less than sixty years ago might not have been served at a local restaurant can now stand before you to take a most sacred oath.*

without thinking. For the world has changed, and we must change with it.

As we consider the road that opens before us, we remember with respectful thanks to those brave Americans who, at this very hour, guard far-off deserts and distant mountains. They have something to tell us today, just as the fallen soldiers who lie in Arlington speak softly through the ages. We honor them not only because they guard our freedom, but because they represent the spirit of service; a willingness to find meaning in something greater than themselves.

And yet, at this point in time – a day that will define the people of our time – it is this same spirit that must live in us all.

For as much as government can do and must do, in the end it is the belief and bravery of the American people on which this nation depends. It is the kindness to take in a stranger when the river walls break. It is the workers who think not of themselves but choose to cut their hours so a friend won't have to lose their job. This is what sees us through our darkest hours. It is the firefighter's bravery to storm the steps of a building filled with smoke, but also a parent's willingness to raise a child with love, that finally decides our future.

The tests and trials we face may be new. The instruments with which we meet them may be new. But those values upon which our success depends – honesty and hard work, strong-heartedness and fair play, acceptance and desire for knowledge, loyalty and love of country – these things are old. These things are true. They have been the quiet force of progress all through our history. What is demanded then is a return to these truths. What is required of us now is a new age of responsibility – a recognition, on the part of every American, that we have duties to ourselves, our nation, and the world. Those are duties that we do not unwillingly accept but rather take freely and happily. We are strong in the knowledge that there is nothing so satisfying to the spirit, so defining of our nature, than giving our all to a hard job.

This is the price and the truth of being a citizen.

This is the beginning of our trust – the knowledge that God calls on us to shape an uncertain future.

This is the meaning of our freedom and what we hold true – why men and women and children of every race and every belief system can join in celebration across this wonderful public area. And it is why a man whose father less than sixty years ago might not have been served food at a local restaurant, can now stand before you to be sworn in to the most important and respected office of President.

*So let us mark this day with remembrance, of who we are and how far we have traveled. In the year of America's birth, in the coldest of months, a small band of patriots huddled by dying campfires on the shores of an icy river. The capital was abandoned. The enemy was advancing. The snow was stained with blood. At a moment when the outcome of our revolution was most in doubt, the father of our nation ordered these words be read to the people:*

*Let it be told to the future world...that in the depth of winter, when nothing but hope and virtue could survive...that the city and the country, alarmed at one common danger, came forth to meet.*

*America. In the face of our common dangers, in this winter of our hardship, let us remember these timeless words. With hope and virtue, let us brave once more the icy currents, and endure what storms may come.*

So, today, let us remember who we are and how far we have traveled. In the year of America's birth, in the coldest of months, a small group of nationalists sat together around dying camp-fires on the edge of an icy river. The capital was empty -- all had left. The enemy was coming forward. The snow was colored with blood. At a time when the outcome of our battle for change was most in doubt, the father of our nation ordered these words be read to the people:

"Let it be told to the future world... that in the depth of winter, when nothing but hope and [honor] could survive... that the city and the country, [awoken to] one common danger, came [forward] to meet [it]."

America. In the face of our common dangers, in this winter of our suffering, let us remember these words always. With hope and honor, let us brave once more the icy "currents, and make it through what storms may come.